

Chapter 6, Economic Development

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Section 1--Introduction

Economic development in the Town of Liberty Grove takes into consideration the following over-arching Town characteristics:

- The seasonality of the population of Liberty Grove, as well as Door County generally, influences many aspects of life, government, culture, and the various topics that comprise this Comprehensive Plan;
- All Town planning must take into consideration the Town's goals of preserving the rural, the open, and the natural character of the Town of Liberty Grove by managing development through planning;
- As is the case with the entire County, the demographics of Liberty Grove tends to be much higher on the upper age level and is aging more and more as the baby boomer generation advances in age;
- Many residents of the Town supplement their income with artisan-type endeavors;
- The Town shares one of the most prominent geologic global features in North America, i.e., the Niagara Escarpment, as well as pristine forests and lake shore areas.

Section 2--Goals, Policies Practices, Procedures, and Action Items

Goal 1: Enhance existing internet service and extend such service to areas of the Town without any existing service.

In October, 2014, Dr. Kashian from the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, presented the findings of a study similar to one that he had conducted in another tourist-type county in Wisconsin based, in this instance, on data he collected within the Town of Liberty Grove. His findings strongly suggest that enhanced, reliable internet services would allow the transient residents to remain in their homes in the Town for more days in the year by virtue of their being able to tele-commute. Their staying even a few more days a year would pump millions of dollars into the local economy as the result of their purchasing food, gasoline, etc.

Policies, Practices, and Action Items:

The Town will make every effort to support this goal by encouraging the businesses that are engaged in providing internet services and by encouraging as many similar enterprises to become involved in providing internet services in rural areas.

The Town will support legislation at the local, state, and federal level that seeks to promote internet services in rural areas.

Whenever possible, the Town will cooperate with internet providers, such as by providing land upon which to erect towers, etc.

Goal 2: Encourage artisan-type enterprises

The Town will continue to make every effort to create friendly environments for small, artisan-like enterprises. An example of these efforts is demonstrated by the Town's successful cooperation with Northeast Wisconsin Technical College for the establishment of a "maker space" at the site of the former Bay Lake Bank in Sister Bay in 2017.

Goal 3: Enhance Access to Seasonal Labor

With the Town, like Door County in general, being so dependent upon seasonal tourism as a bulwark of its economy, the Town should encourage as much as possible access to temporary, affordable housing for temporary labor, and to the attraction of young people to fill positions, part-time, seasonal, and temporary (including federal government policies regarding work visas for foreign students). See Chapter 2, Housing.

Goal 4: Encourage Development of Geo-Tourism

The Town should capitalize on the existence of the Niagara Escarpment as well as the burgeoning field of geo-tourism to make the Town the center for geo-tourism in Northeast Wisconsin.

Goal 5: Furthering Economic Stability

In order to increase the number of wage earner positions, the Town should encourage local businesses to develop marketing strategies that utilize the names and images of the Town and of the County.

Economic stability and growth also depends on expanding of existing marinas, encouraging new marinas, enhancing boat ramps, and enhancing the use and expansion of park lands for recreation and tourism.

The Town is encouraged to work with private agencies and government agencies for job training opportunities, affordable housing, and year-round wage positions.

Goal 6: Mitigate Property Tax Burdens on Businesses

As far as possible, the Town should work on its own as well as in cooperation with other levels of government to formulate policies to reduce property taxes and other governmental and administrative burdens on businesses.

Goal 7: Equitable Returns of Tax Revenue

The Town should pursue every avenue to receive an equitable return of tax revenue and services by developing effective communication between Town, County, and State regarding tax revenue generated and returned to the Town, including, but not limited to shared revenue, general transportation aid, county services, DNR in lieu of tax, fire dues distribution, forest crop payment, and payment of municipal services. See Chapter 7 on Intergovernmental Cooperation.

Goal 8: Enhance Tourism

The Town should utilize any and all organizations and associations that can provide local tourism-related programs and/or information for the Town.

Section 3--Economic Development Strategies

The Town is in a good position for limited business development given its many positive attributes, which include:

- An abundance of area for future growth
- Access to state and county highways
- The Town surrounding the Village of Sister Bay
- Its rural character and an abundance of natural resources

With controlled growth, the Town can look to expand its tax revenue, plus capitalize on future growth in nearby communities to afford greater job opportunities to its Town residents.

Identifying the location, type, and volume of businesses the Town seeks to acquire will be key to the Town's long range planning regarding its vision. Therefore, the Town Board and the Town Plan Commission will need to closely monitor growth, its impacts on existing infrastructure, and determine the needed regulations to minimize any negative

impacts it may have. A cost-benefit analysis of a needs assessment may be required in order to determine all aspects of future development of industries throughout the planning period.

The Plan will direct development to designated commercial and industrial areas in the future, in order to steer incompatible uses away from the Town's defined residential and agricultural areas. This will help to enhance other land uses by minimizing and controlling likely nuisances.

Section 4--Characteristics of the Labor Force

Place of Work

The labor force is comprised of employed persons and those seeking employment, and the labor force excludes persons in the armed forces and those under 16 years of age. Variations in the number of persons in the labor force depend upon demographic changes in the population as well as the seasonal nature of many businesses.

In the County as a whole, 93.3% of county residents worked within the County, thus indicating either a sufficient amount of employment opportunities within the County or residents not being near any other population centers to which commuting becomes feasible.

Table 6.1 Place of Work, 2011-2015, Town of Liberty Grove and Selected Areas. Source: 2011-2015 US Census; American Community Survey 5 yr. estimates.

Occupations

In 2010, the majority of employed persons in the Town were either in sales and office occupations (24.8%) or they were in management, professional, and related occupations (25.5%). In addition, there was greater than 15% employment in service occupations (29.6%) and construction, extraction, and maintenance (14.7%)[See Table 6.2].

Door County had the highest percentage of their employment opportunities in the same occupations as the Town of Liberty Grove.

The Town of Baileys Harbor and the Village of Sister Bay had higher employment in the service occupations. For all the selected areas, trends in employment by occupation were somewhat similar.

Table 6.2, Employed Persons by Occupation, 2010, Town of Liberty Grove and Selected Areas. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing 2010, DP-3. Average Civilian Labor Force Estimates, 1990-2010, Door County. Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Civilian Labor Force Estimates for the years cited.

Unemployment Rate

The civilian labor force for Door County has experienced both moderate increases and decreases in unemployment since 1990. The unemployment rate and the number of unemployed in 1999 was the lowest it has been during the whole decade. For the period 1990 to 2001, the civilian labor force increased 9.4%, the number of unemployed decreased 16.3%, and the number of employed increased 11.3%.

If trends continue, the County will continue to face a labor shortage. While only 9.4% more people entered the workforce in Door County between 1990 and 2001, numbers indicate that the need for more employees is much greater. There are many factors which may be contributing to the labor shortage, such as the geographic location of the County, a lack of attainable housing, non-competitive wages, the aging of the population and the age of immigrating residents, the seasonality of employment, as well as many other possible factors. See this chapter's Goal 3 above.

Employment Forecast

In 1996, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development created projections for industries, occupations, and the labor force called the *Northeast Wisconsin Projections: 1992-2003*. These projections are for all of Northeast Wisconsin, including Door County. The study

concluded that overall employment was expected to increase by more than 20% in the region. Unemployment rates were expected to remain low through 2005, and labor shortages would be common in some occupations.

Service industry employers were predicted to add approximately 18,400 jobs to the region's labor market by 2005. The largest divisions within this industry group were predicted to be business and health services with a similar growth in professional and technical jobs. With the aging of the population, the demand for such services will continue to increase.

Local Employment Forecast

Statistics on the number of employees each employer has in the Town of Liberty Grove are no longer kept. This data is now suppressed to ensure confidentiality of the individual employers. Census information provides only the employment status of residents, not the employment numbers of the businesses in the Town.

Median Household Income

In 1999, the median household income in the Town of Liberty Grove was \$43,472 (See Table 6.4 of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan). This was greater than the Town of Baileys Harbor, the Village of Sister Bay, and the County, but less than the State of Wisconsin's median household income. The greatest percentage of households were in the income range of \$50,000 to \$74,999 for the Town of Liberty Grove and for Door County, and also for the State. The Village of Sister Bay had the greatest percentage of households as having the range of \$15,000 to \$24,999 as an annual household income, while Baileys Harbor had the greatest number of people at the \$35,000 to \$49,999 range. These numbers could be skewed upward by the large retirement community located in Liberty Grove.

In 2001, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce (WDOC) released figures for median household income. According to the WDOC, the median household income in the Town of Liberty Grove in 1998 was \$37,868, which is a 34.9% increase from 1989. The 2000 census reported the 1999 median household income in the Town at \$43,472.

Personal Income

The per return income for residents in the Town of Liberty Grove has increased 30.3% for the period 1995 to 1999 (see Table 6.3). This percent increase is less than any other area except the State of Wisconsin for the same period, while the 2000 personal income for the Town of Liberty Grove was second only to the State of Wisconsin as the highest when compared to other areas. Per return income is based on income tax returns filed in the year cited to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

[Table 6.3: Municipal Per Return Income, 1995-2000. Town of Liberty Grove and Selected Areas. Source: Wisconsin Municipal Per Return Income Report for years cited. Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Division of Research and Analysis.]

Section 5--Economic Base

Employment by Economic Division

The future of the Town of Liberty Grove's population requires an understanding of the local and county economy. The Economic Base Analysis technique divides the economy into basic and non-basic sectors. The basic sector is made up of local businesses that are dependent on external factors. Manufacturing and local resource-oriented firms (like logging or mining) are usually considered to be basic sector firms because their fortunes depend largely upon non-local

factors, and they usually export their goods. The non-basic sector, in contrast, is composed of those firms that depend largely upon local business conditions. Economic Base Theory asserts that the means of strengthening and growing the local economy is to develop and enhance the basic sector. [Emphasis Added].

Nine basic economic divisions are used for Economic Base Analysis. There are four good-producing sectors: agriculture, forestry, and fishing; mining; construction; and, fourth, manufacturing. There are five service-producing sectors: transportation and public utilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and, fifth, services.

Location Quotient Analysis

The Location Quotient analysis technique compares the local economy, Door County, to the United States. This comparison allows for identifying specializations in the Door County economy (See Table 6.7 in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan). If the Location Quotient (LQ) is less than 1.0, all employment is considered non-basic, therefore that industry is not meeting local demand for a given good or service. An LQ equal to 1.0 suggests that the local employment is exactly sufficient to meet the local demand for a given good or service—employment is still considered non-basic. An LQ greater than 1.0 suggests that local employment produces more goods and services than the local economy can use, therefore these goods and services are exported to non-local areas, which makes them basic sector employment.

Table 6.4: Employment by Industry Group, 2011-2015, Liberty Grove, Location Quotient Analysis. Source: 2011-2015 US Census; American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates.

Threshold Analysis

Export Base (Basic Employment)

There are four areas within the 1998 Door County economy which can be considered basic employment areas: farm employment; agricultural services, forestry, and fishing; construction; and, fourth, retail trade. These four areas produce more goods and services than the local economy can use. When LQs increase over time, this suggests that the Door County economy is getting closer to reaching and exceeding local demand. For example, construction had gone from 1.08 in 1990 to 1.46 in 1998. Having basic employment also suggests that if a downturn in the local economy occurs, these sectors will not be strongly affected because they are dependent more on non-local economies. Having strong basic sector employment and industry will strengthen the local economy.

Non-Basic Employment Industry

Under private employment, there are four areas which can be considered non-basic; manufacturing; wholesale trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and, fourth, services. For example, the manufacturing industry LQ actually decreased since 1990; however the Door County economy could support more of this industry. There is currently no industry with an LQ equal to 1, which would indicate that local demand is being met and services are not being exported; however, there are several industries which are very close.

Section 6--Strengths and Challenges

In retaining or attracting businesses, the strengths and challenges of an area gives a perspective on the area from a business point of view and reflect concerns, issues, and questions that current and future business-owners would/should ask about a community in formulating a business plan or before expanding their business.

Physical Capabilities

Utilities

Strength: Electric services are provided by Wisconsin Public Service. The Village of Sister Bay is also located in the southwestern portion of the Town and can provide potential new commercial or industrial businesses with the infrastructure that Liberty Grove lacks.

Challenge: The Town currently only has a public sewer and water system in what is called “Liberty Grove Utility District No. 1”, which is beyond the northern edge of the Village of Sister Bay and, thus, the Town can offer potential commercial businesses this service.

Telecommunications

Strength: Telephone service, local and long distance, including digital switching, is provided in the Town. There are no major differences in the quality of telephone service between the Town and other municipalities within Door County. Cable and fiber optics are also provided to a portion of the Town.

Challenge: Cable and fiber optic services do not reach many areas of the Town.

Transportation

Strength: The Town has access to STH 42 and STH 57, which are pathways that provide highway exposure to the Town.

Challenge: The Town does not have its own access to rail or air service. The Town is geographically isolated on the end of the peninsula.

However, while isolation might be seen as a challenge, isolation could also be seen by many who decide to visit or settle in Northern Door as a positive factor in making their decision to escape the hustle and bustle of their everyday/former environments.

Local Labor Force Characteristics

Strength: the unemployment rate (5.2%) within the County is low. The employment rates for the County grew approximately 5% over the last ten years.

Challenge: The Town is experiencing an aging structure shift due to the baby boomers reaching retirement age. Current and future labor shortages are due to low numbers in the age group 16-24, and due to the large number of seasonal businesses within the area employing and needing large numbers of young workers. In addition, more of these younger individuals are moving away to find year-round employment and housing opportunities elsewhere.

Industrial Commercial Site Availability

The Town has space for commercial or light industrial development along STH 42 north of Sister Bay and two locations on Old Stage Road as well as on CTH Q.

Programmatic Capabilities

Existing Business Base Analysis

The Town has approximately 284 acres dedicated to industrial and commercial uses, or approximately 5% of its developed lands.

Businesses within the Town include retail, hospitality, wholesale, manufacturing, excavating, storage building, etc. See General Plan Design Map.

Available Government Services

The Town has an adopted Comprehensive Plan, a County Land Division ordinance and a Town Land Division ordinance. Police and ambulance services are provided by Door County with significant assistance from the local Sister Bay/Liberty Grove Fire Department. Fire services are provided by a joint Sister Bay/Liberty Grove Fire Department. Postal services are provided by the Sister Bay, Ellison Bay, and Baileys Harbor post offices. Government assistance comes from the Town Board, the

Plan Commission, the Town Administrator and the Town Clerk, and various planning agencies which assist in writing grant applications and monitoring these grants (e.g., park acquisitions/improvements, community developments, housing improvements, etc.).

Specific Inhibitors to Economic Development

Infrastructure does not exist in many planned areas of commercial and industrial growth. Rail and air services do not exist within the Town. The geographic isolation and lack of redundant telecommunication and power systems contribute to the specific inhibitors.

Training Programs

Strength: The Town has access to training from UW-Green Bay, the UW Extension services (providing education and training seminars and courses), and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College.

Challenge: More comprehensive training sites are between 45 minutes and two hours (by automobile) away. NWTC's 2018 location in Sister Bay will reduce travel time for certain types of training.

Quality of Life

Housing Prices

Approximately 40% of the Town residents paid more than 30% of their incomes towards housing costs in 2000. In 1999, the median household income was \$43,472. Based on the household income median, a median housing payment would be \$1,086 or approximately a home valued around \$155,000 at 7.5% interest. As of May 2001, the median price of a home in northern Door County was \$243,000, and approximately \$200,000 in the Town of Liberty Grove.

Aesthetics

The Town consists of rural countryside with bluffs along the Bay of Green Bay and low sandy area along the Lake Michigan shoreline. The abundance of shoreline, open fields, woodlands, and sloping terrain make up much of the Town's prominent views.

Environment

The Town consists of areas of woodlands, farm fields, miles of waterfront along the Bay and Lake Michigan as well as acres of wetlands. The waters are open to recreational activities and fishing, while much of the lands are open to hunting and hiking. The County has ordinances and plans protecting and enhancing the environment.

Education and Health Care

The Town is within the Gibraltar School District. Health care is available in the communities of Sister Bay, Gibraltar, and Sturgeon Bay. Dental services exist within Sister Bay and within Sturgeon Bay.

Evaluation of Environmentally Contaminated Sites

Recently the DNR and the EPA have been urging the cleanup of contaminated commercial or industrial sites so they may be used more productively. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources list of Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) sites, there is currently one such site in the Town of Liberty Grove. The Town also has five sites which are designated as part of the DNR Environmental Repair Program (ERP). These areas are sites other than LUST sites that have contaminated soil and/or groundwater.

Community Finances

A community must be concerned about its ability to generate sufficient public revenues to provide the types and levels of services demanded by its citizens.

As of the writing of this document, the allowable debt limit is 5% of the Town's equalized value.

At the time of the writing of this document, the Town's indebtedness as of 2017 is \$640,781.90 to be paid off in full in 2018 making the Town debt free unless new debt is acquired.

Chapter 6, Maps, Tables and Charts

Table 6.1 - Place of Work 2011-2015		
Liberty Grove town, Door County, Wisconsin	100%	
Worked in State	97.4%	
In County	2.6%	
Outside County	0%	
Worked out of State		
2011-2015 US Census; American Community Survey 5 Yr Estimates		

Table 6.2: Employed Liberty Grove Persons by Occupation, 2010

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Management, business, science, arts	175	25.5%
Service	203	29.6%
Sales and office	170	24.8%
Natural resources, construction, maintenance	101	14.7%
<u>Production, transportation, material moving</u>	38	5.4%
Total employed	687	100%

Table 6.3 - Household Income, 1999, Town of Liberty Grove Selected Areas

Table 6.3- Annual Household Income						
Annual Household Income	Liberty Grove	Baileys Harbor	Sister Bay	Door County	Wisconsin	
Less than \$10,000	46	25	37	824	148,964	
\$10,000 to \$14,999	44	26	40	847	121,366	
\$15,000 to \$24,999	118	57	87	1,857	264,897	
\$25,000 to \$34,999	108	66	67	1,717	276,033	
\$35,000 to \$49,999	178	124	54	2,208	377,749	
\$50,000 to \$74,999	203	89	71	2,482	474,299	
\$75,000 to \$99,999	65	54	48	855	226,374	
\$100,000 to \$149,999	44	22	23	741	133,719	
\$150,000 to \$199,999	18	5	4	122	30,598	
\$200,000 or more	18	3	4	158	32,305	
Total Households	842	471	435	11,811	2,086,304	
Median Income	\$43,472	\$41,350	\$33,224	\$38,812	\$43,791	

Table 6.4 Liberty Grove town, Door County, Wisconsin

	Total	Male	Percent Male	Female	Percent Female
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	687	371	54.00%	316	46.00%
Management, business, science, and arts occupations:	175	101	57.70%	74	42.30%
Management, business, and financial occupations:	113	77	68.10%	36	31.90%
Management occupations	86	50	58.10%	36	41.90%
Business and financial operations occupations	27	27	100.00%	0	0.00%
Computer, engineering, and science occupations:	18	11	61.10%	7	38.90%
Computer and mathematical occupations	10	7	70.00%	3	30.00%
Architecture and engineering occupations	4	4	100.00%	0	0.00%
Life, physical, and social science occupations	4	0	0.00%	4	100.00%
Education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations:	35	9	25.70%	26	74.30%
Community and social services occupations	8	0	0.00%	8	100.00%
Legal occupations	0	0	-	0	-
Education, training, and library occupations	9	0	0.00%	9	100.00%
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations	18	9	50.00%	9	50.00%
Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations:	9	4	44.40%	5	55.60%
Health diagnosing and treating practitioners and other technical occupations	4	4	100.00%	0	0.00%
Health technologists and technicians	5	0	0.00%	5	100.00%
Service occupations:	203	115	56.70%	88	43.30%
Healthcare support occupations	18	0	0.00%	18	100.00%
Protective service occupations:	5	5	100.00%	0	0.00%
Fire fighting and prevention, and other protective service workers including supervisors	5	5	100.00%	0	0.00%
Law enforcement workers including supervisors	0	0	-	0	-
Food preparation and serving related occupations	102	61	59.80%	41	40.20%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	52	44	84.60%	8	15.40%
Personal care and service occupations	26	5	19.20%	21	80.80%
Sales and office occupations:	170	44	25.90%	126	74.10%
Sales and related occupations	103	32	31.10%	71	68.90%

Office and administrative support occupations	67	+/-28	12	+/-11	17.90%	+/-15.3	55	+/-26	82.10%	+/-15.3
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations:	101	+/-33	91	+/-31	90.10%	+/-9.0	10	+/-9	9.90%	+/-9.0
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	18	+/-19	13	+/-18	72.20%	+/-44.1	5	+/-6	27.80%	+/-44.1
Construction and extraction occupations	59	+/-26	58	+/-26	98.30%	+/-6.1	1	+/-3	1.70%	+/-6.1
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	24	+/-16	20	+/-15	83.30%	+/-23.0	4	+/-6	16.70%	+/-23.0
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	38	+/-23	20	+/-14	52.60%	+/-23.3	18	+/-15	47.40%	+/-23.3
Production occupations	15	+/-13	5	+/-7	33.30%	+/-39.3	10	+/-11	66.70%	+/-39.3
Transportation occupations	15	+/-12	15	+/-12	100.00%	+/-56.2	0	+/-9	0.00%	+/-56.2
Material moving occupations	8	+/-11	0	+/-9	0.00%	+/-76.9	8	+/-11	100.00%	+/-76.9
2011-2015 US Census; American Community Survey 5 Yr Estimates										

